



This common **Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD)** is caused by tiny parasites called protozoa. They live in the wet areas of the genitals of infected people—the urethra in men and the vagina in women. Trich is passed from one person to another during sex.

### What Are the Signs?

Trich causes inflammation. The medical word "-itis" means inflammation. **Vaginitis** in women and **urethritis** in men can be caused by trich.

If there are signs, they usually come 4 to 20 days after contact with an infected partner. But the signs can come 6 months or even years after infection.

In women the key signs are a heavy yellow-green discharge, unpleasant odor, itching and a feeling of irritation in the vagina. Pain while urinating or while having sex is another sign. There may also be pain the lower abdomen. As many as half of the women who have trich show no signs.

Most men who are infected show no signs, but they can still infect their sex partners. For men who notice signs, there might be a thin, clear or white discharge from the penis, or pain while urinating. Men with urethritis can be tested for trich if other STDs are not found.



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## Is There a Test?

Yes. The doctor uses a swab to take fluid from the vagina or penis, then looks for protozoa under a microscope. This test works about 65% of the time. A better test is a culture, but it takes longer and is more expensive.

Sometimes trich is found around cells taken for a Pap smear. Male semen can also be checked for trich.

## Is There a Cure?

Yes. A drug called metronidazole or Flagyl is used. **During treatment you must not drink any alcohol.** This will cause vomiting. Pregnant women can't take this drug during their first 3 months of pregnancy.

**Don't have sex until all partners are cured.** Some people may have to be treated more than once. All partners must be treated **even if there are no signs.** This is very important.

## Is Trich Serious?

There is no lasting damage, but women with trich may be more likely to have babies who are premature or are born too small to be healthy. In men, trich can irritate the prostate gland. For both men and women, an inflammation of the genitals can make it easier to get other STD infections. **If you have trich or any other STD, get treatment right away.**

## How Can I Prevent Trich?

- Know that birth control pills do not prevent STDs
- Learn the right way to use condoms
- Use a new latex condom every time you have sex.

## Where Can I Learn More?

If you have questions, call your doctor, local health department, or community clinic.

Or call the National STD Hotline at  
**1-800-227-8922**

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